ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES FOR COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES IN THE SECOND AVENUE NORTH COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION AREA

Article I. Definitions

For the purpose of these guidelines, certain terms and words are hereby defined.

(a) "Commercial Rehabilitation Area" That portion of an Urban Renewal Area so designated in a Council adopted Neighborhood Revitalization and Improvement Plan in which certain improvements are mandatory and which is included within the rebate areas as herein defined. (See "Mandatory Area" on attached map)

(b) "Neighborhood Revitalization and Improvement Plan" An Urban Renewal Plan so entitled and adopted by the Birmingham City Council subsequent to January 31, 1978.

(c) "Design Review Committee" A committee appointed by the City Council to review and approve the private physical development of Commercial Rehabilitation Areas according to the provisions of the ordinance and other duties as assigned by the City Council (Section 60-5, Article IV of Ordinance 79-56).

(d) "Commercial Rehabilitation Incentive Program" A program of financial incentives (rebates) adopted by the City Council to encourage the rehabilitation of commercial structures in Commercial Rehabilitation Areas.

(e) "Rebate Area" That portion of an Urban Renewal Area so designated in the Council adopted Neighborhood Revitalization and Improvement Plan in which certain improvements are voluntary and if in compliance with these guidelines are eligible for rebate. (See map)

(f) "Shopping Street" A street on which predominantly retail businesses front, which emphasizes pedestrian rather than vehicular accessibility.

(g) "Public Improvement Area" An area in which the City has undertaken extensive physical improvements to public facilities.

(h) "Public Right-of-way" or "Public Way" Any street, alley or other public way which has been dedicated to the public use.

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR THE SECOND AVENUE NORTH COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION DISTRICT

Article II. Rehabilitation of Existing Commercial Properties

The following standards shall be administered by the Design Review Committee and shall apply to all existing commercial (non-residential) structures whether occupied or vacant in the Second Avenue North Commercial Revitalization District. These guidelines are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings

A. Store Fronts and Show Windows

(1) A store front shall include the building face, porches and any entrance areas leading to the door, sidelights, transoms, display platform devices, including lighting and signage designed to be viewed from the public right-of-way or parking lots.

(2) All show windows, including entrances, signs, lighting, sun protection, porches, security grilles, etc., shall be compatible and harmonious with the scale and character of the structure. All store front elements must be located within their original opening dimension, unless approved by the Design Review Committee.

(3) Unless approved in advance by the Design Review Committee, show windows shall not be painted for permanent advertising purposes but may be painted for authorized identification of the place of business as authorized by the Design Review Committee, and in accordance with Paragraph D, "Signs".

(4) Show windows with trim, mullions or muntins shall be restored as closely as possible to their original condition.

(5) Glass in show windows shall be untinted and transparent or like the original. Translucent, opaque, reflective or colored glass shall be permitted only with prior approval by the Design Review Committee, or unless documentation exists that such glass was original.

(6) Unless approved by the Design Review Committee solid or permanently closed or covered store fronts shall not be permitted, unless original or treated as an integral part of building facade using wall materials and window detailing compatible with the upper floors, or other building surfaces; all damaged, sagging or otherwise deteriorated store fronts, show windows or entrances shall be restored.

(7) Ceiling, partitions and other interior elements that are visible through the window from the exterior shall be restored as closely as feasible to original condition or be placed in good condition. (See windows)

B. Windows:

(1) Replace missing or irreparable windows on significant facades with materials that match the original. In general, do not replace with anodized aluminum frames, or mirrored or tinted glass. In general, do not change size or arrangement of panes, muntins and rails where they contribute to the historic character of the building.

(2) Windows not in the front of buildings shall be kept properly repaired or, with Fire department approval, may be closed, except where side or rear facade is also a primary facade.

(3) All windows must be tight fitting and have sashes of proper size and design to be compatible and harmonious with the scale and character of the structure. Sashes with rotten wood and/or deteriorated metal, broken joints or loose mullions or muntins shall be replaced. All broken and missing window glass shall be replaced with new glass or approved glazing material, consistent with the original glazing material.

(4) Window opening in upper floors of the front of the building shall not be boarded up, filled, nor window panes painted.

(5) Ceilings, partitions and other interior elements shall be restored as closely as feasible to their original condition. If any such elements terminate inside the window area, and are visible through the window from the exterior, they shall be stopped short of the glass and the exterior edge or face shall be treated in such a manner so as not to be obvious from the exterior. Boxes, crates, etc. shall not be stacked inside windows unless concealed by shutters, blinds, drapes or other appropriate window covering.

C. Building Fronts, Sides and Rears Abutting Street, Public Parking Lots or Public Areas

(1) All structural and decorative elements of building fronts, sides and rears abutting and/or prominently visible from streets or public improvement areas shall be repaired or replaced to match as closely as possible the original materials and construction of that building. Rotten, deteriorated or weakened portions shall be removed, repaired and replaced to match as closely as possible the original.

(2) All exterior front, side or rear walls which have been wholly or partially resurfaced or built over shall be restored as nearly as feasible to their original condition except where the newer material is considered historically significant, in which case it shall be repaired as necessary. Existing painted masonry walls shall have loose material removed and be painted to match as closely the original color scheme. Unpainted masonry walls may be cleaned by the gentlest means possible. No sandblasting or any other abrasive cleaning method shall be permitted. Samples of all proposed colors shall be submitted for approval to the Design Review Committee with proposed improvement plans. Patched walls shall match the existing adjacent surfaces as to materials, texture, color, bond and jointing. Mortar used in all masonry repair must match original in color, composition and tooling.

(3) Applied facing material shall be removed to reveal the original exterior material which

shall be cleaned and repaired as required, unless facing material is determined historically significant, in which case it shall be repaired as necessary.

(4) Existing miscellaneous elements on the building fronts, such as empty electrical conduit, unused sign brackets, etc., shall be removed and building surface repaired or rebuilt as required to match adjacent surfaces.

(5) Sheet metal gutters, downspouts and copings shall be repaired or replaced as necessary and shall be neatly located and securely installed. Gutters and downspouts that require painting shall be painted to harmonize with the other building front elements, consistent with original color scheme.

D. Signs

(1) Signs shall be limited to those identifying the use conducted therein. Except with prior approval by the Design Review Committee, advertising by material or product manufacturers and suppliers other than the primary use of the property shall not be permitted. Such existing advertising or business signs that are determined historically significant may be retained if feasible. All lighting elements such as wires, conduits, junction boxes, transformers, ballasts, switches and panel boxes shall be concealed from view as much as possible.

(2) Signs and displays for advertising or promotion are not permitted in public rights-of-way unless specifically authorized in writing by the Design Review Committee.

(3) Flat signs shall be placed parallel to the building face and shall not project more that 12" from the surface of the building and shall not exceed in square footage an area two times the width in feet of the frontage of the building. In the case of corner properties or properties with two entrance frontages, each facade is to be calculated separately as to size allowed for each. Signs on visible side walls shall not exceed in square footage the area permissible for front walls on the same building. Flat signs shall be placed no higher than the bottom of the second story window where windows exist or approximately fourteen (14) feet above grade level for single story buildings. Lettering applied to ground floor show windows or entrance doors shall not exceed six (6) inches in height, and the text limited to identification of the primary business therein. Signs identifying the business occupant shall be permitted at rear entrance doors but shall not exceed six (6) square feet in size except where there is a retail shop entrance or where authorized by the Design Review Committee.

(4) Projecting signs shall not be permitted on any portion of any building except where specifically approved by Design Review Committee. Generally, Design Review Committee will consider approval of a projecting sign which is less than twelve (12) square feet per face or, where such was original with the building, or which adds a desirable design element harmonious and compatible with the overall desired historic character and rehabilitation goals of the entire Second Avenue North Commercial Revitalization Area; and otherwise does not detract from or pose a visual impedance

to adjacent businesses.

(5) Painted signs on building surfaces or on framed backings or use of separate cutout letters shall be permitted in accordance with the above limits for flat signs.

(6) With prior approval of the Design Review Committee, secondary signs shall be permitted for the identification of commercial tenants occupying the upper floors of a building. Such signs shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area and shall not project more than two (2) inches beyond the surface of the building.

(7) Roof top signs, signs on or above the parapet of a building, billboards, or other outdoor advertising signs painted or mounted on structures except as otherwise herein provided shall not be permitted, except with prior approval of the Design Review Committee, or where such existing signs are determined to be historically significant.

(8) Painted or sewn signs designated only business name or address on awnings of free. standing canopies are permitted. A sign that is part of an original marquee may be permitted if in keeping with the building type or use with prior approval of the Design Review Committee.

(9) Portable signs shall not be permitted, except with the approval of the Design Review Committee.

(10) All signs not conforming to these requirements shall be removed within two (2) years from the project initiation date. No lease for such billboards expiring after the project initiation date shall be renewed.

(11) Neon, flashing or illuminated signs can be used with the approval of the Design Review Committee.

E <u>Awnings:</u>

(1) If compatible and harmonious with the scale and character of the structure, and adjoining structures, soft, flameproof awnings are permitted over the first floor and on upper floors above windows only.

(2) Awnings shall not project more than seven (7) feet from the building front, shall not be lower than eight (8) feet above grade and shall terminate against the building at a height not to exceed the lesser of approximately fourteen (14) feet above the pavement or the bottom of second floor window sills, except with prior approval of the Design Review Committee.

(3) Rigid or fixed awnings or canopies are not permitted unless original or an integral part of the structure and compatible and harmonious with the scale and character of the structure and adjacent structures and pose no visual impedance to adjacent buildings.

New rigid or fixed awnings or canopies may be added to existing structure subject to restrictions outlined above and with prior approval by the Design Review Committee.

F. Building Walls Visible from Public Ways

If a building, side or rear, is exposed to view from a public way or public parking lot, the face of the building so exposed shall be improved in a manner consistent with these architectural guidelines as necessary to avoid visually detracting from the area.

G. Mechanical and Electrical Equipment

(1) New individual room air conditioning units shall not be installed in front or side wall windows, if they will be visible from streets or public improvements, without prior approval by the Design Review Committee.

(2) Through wall air conditioning units may be installed subject to prior approval by the Design Review Committee, on non-primary facades only provided where visible from streets or public improvements the units are painted or otherwise made as unobtrusive as possible, do not project beyond the building face more than six (6) inches, and do not unnecessarily detract from the building character and appearance.

(3) Grilles, louvers, vents and other mechanical and electrical items including utility service locations may be installed in or on exterior walls of non-primary facades only, where unavoidable and necessary for the function of the building, subject to prior approval by the Design Review Committee, provided where visible from streets or public improvements the necessary items are treated or otherwise made as unobtrusive as possible and do not unnecessarily detract from the building character and appearance.

(4) Necessary mechanical and electrical equipment in interior areas shall be placed in such a way as to require minimum structural alterations and minimum visual obstructions of original wall and ceiling materials.

(5) To the extent possible lighting systems and fixtures shall be utilized which are consistent with the original.

H. Roofs

(1) Deteriorated roof coverings shall be replaced with new material that matches as closely as possible the original. All architectural features that give the roof its character shall be preserved or restored. The original roof shape shall be preserved.

(2) Chimneys, elevator penthouses or any other auxiliary structure on the roofs shall be repaired and cleaned as required for rear and side walls.

(3) Any mechanical equipment placed on a roof shall be so located as to be hidden from view from the shopping street, and to be as inconspicuous as possible from other viewpoints. Equipment shall be screened with suitable elements of a permanent nature or finished so as to harmonize with the rest of the building. Where such screening **is**

unfeasible, equipment shall be treated in such a manner as to minimize its visibility.

(4) Roofs shall be cleaned and kept free of trash, debris or any other element which is not a permanent part of the building.

I. Auxiliary Structures

Structures at the rears of buildings attached or unattached to the principal commercial structure which are structurally deficient shall be properly repaired or demolished, unless they are identified as contributing to the historic character of the district, in which case they shall be restored according to these guidelines.

J. Rear and Side Yards and Parking Areas

When a rear or side yard exists or is created through demolition, the owner may utilize the space for loading, parking or other permitted uses provided the area is appropriately landscaped and/or screened from all adjacent streets, alleys, and public improvement areas. A sign not exceeding six (6) square feet may be used to identify and control parking and loading, with prior approval by the Design Review Committee.

K. Demolition

No structures shall be demolished without prior approval by the Design Review Committee. In general, no request for approval of a demolition will be considered without detailed plans for the proposed use of the site after demolition.

L. Vacant Lots

When a vacant lot exists or is created through demolition, the owner must properly landscape and/or screen the property from adjacent streets, alleys and public improvement areas; cover all areas not actively used for storage; parking or loading with grass or other ground cover approved for the property by the Design Review Committee; and keep all the property free of trash and debris.

M. Other

All other repairs to a building, as determined during the initial inspection as necessary to safeguard the health and safety of possible building occupants, shall be made in accordance with applicable sections of the City Building Code, and will be approved by the Design Review Committee, and shall comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Article Ill. New Development of Properties

The following standards shall be administered by the Design Review Committee and shall apply to all new structures or additions to existing structures in the Second Avenue North Commercial Revitalization District Area.

A. Building Design:

(1) Each building unit, (whether existing or proposed) shall be designed as an integral element of the Historic District, the overall site design and the Neighborhood Revitalization and Improvement Plan and shall reflect be compatible with and complement the character of the surrounding area.

(2) Proposed commercial buildings shall be located so as to be compatible with any adjacent residential areas and organized in a manner to coordinate customer and employee physical requirements. Building facades shall be complementary to those adjacent in terms of amenity and appearance. And should be compatible in scale, materials, fenestration, solid to void ratio, height, setback, and orientation on the site.

B. Parking Design:

(1) Off-street parking areas shall be designed with careful regard to orderly arrangement, landscaping and ease of access as an integral part of the total site design. Off street parking areas, except at entrance ways, shall be separated from streets by appropriate landscaping or structure.

(2) Vehicular access to parking areas shall be direct and not in conflict with general vehicular movement serving the various uses within the site. Ingress and egress points shall be well distanced from intersection to avoid congestion and interference with traffic.

C. Loading and Service Area Design:

Loading and service space shall be provided in convenient off-street facilities to serve business uses in the proposed development to the maximum extent possible.

D. Street, Pedestrian Walkways and Open Space Design:

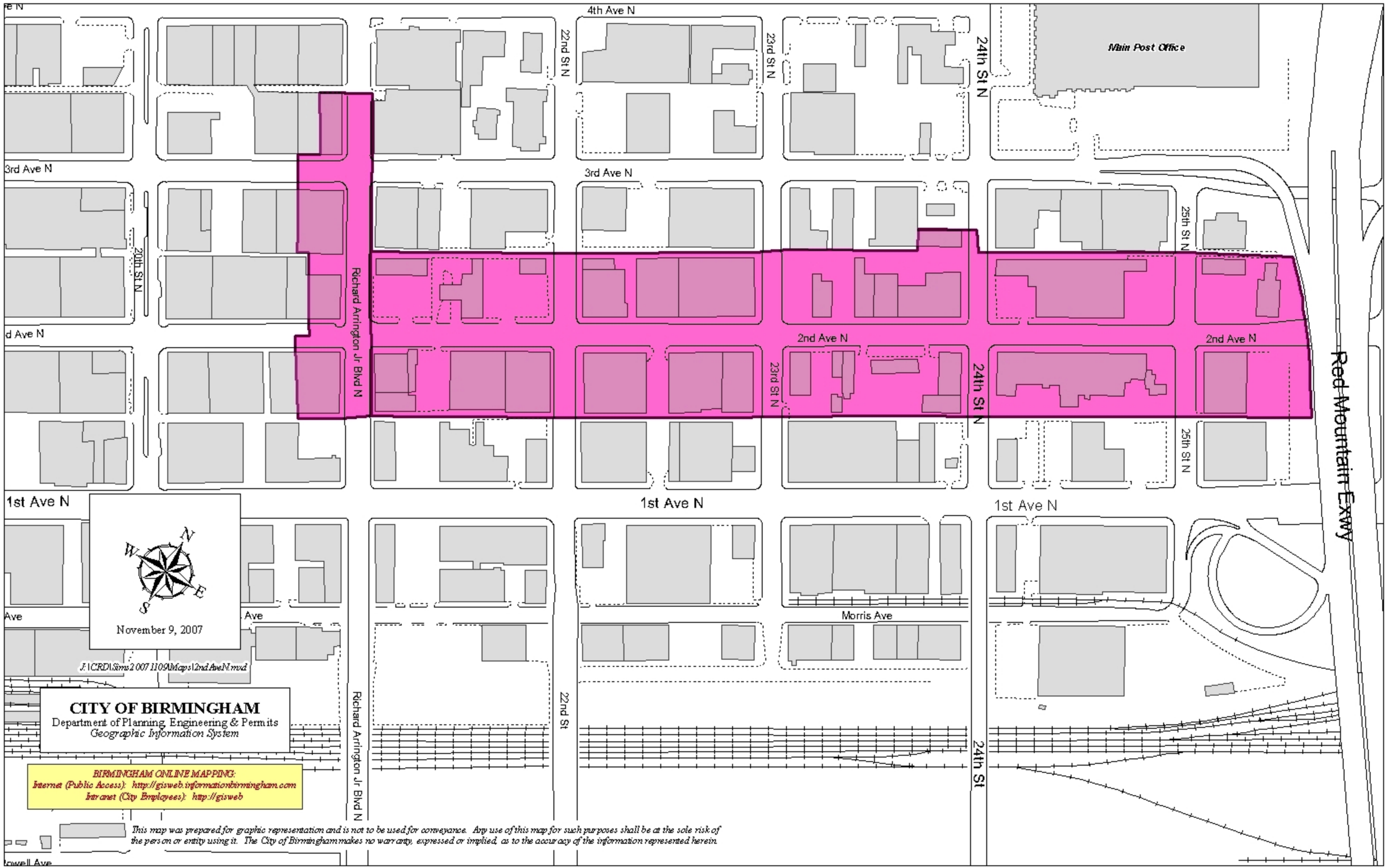
Proposed development shall consider the provision of appropriate open space in combination with the proper sitting of buildings. Streets, pedestrian walkways and open spaces including street furniture and signs shall be designed as an integral part of the overall design, properly related to adjacent existing and proposed buildings.

E. Landscape Design:

A coordinated landscape program for the proposed development shall be incorporated for the entire proposed site including landscape treatment for open space, streets and parking areas. Landscaping shall include trees, shrubbery and planting in combination with related paving and surface treatments.

F. Signs:

All signs for new structures and additions to existing structures shall conform to the requirements set forth in Article H, Section D, "Signs".



2nd Avenue North Commercial Revitalization District